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ABSTRACT

This student guide is intended to assist persons employed as supervisors in developing communication skills. Discussed in the first two sections are the nature of communication (communication skills and processes and planning communications) and the skills of communication (writing, speaking, and behavioral skills). Each of these sections contains an introduction, sections of instructional text that are interspersed with reinforcing learning activities, and a section summary. The third part of the guide includes a series of performance checks (an end check, a tutor check, and a work-based project). Concluding the guide is a unit review that reviews the objectives addressed in the guide, describes related extension courses, and lists recommended reference materials. (MN)

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ED268250

An Open Tech Project

SUPERVISING COMMUNICATION

60: Communicating

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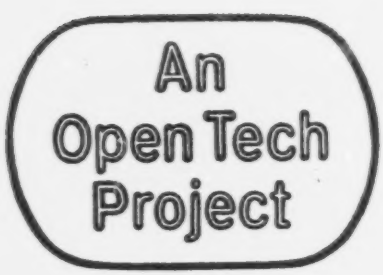
60: COMMUNICATING

Steven Lane



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Steven Lane
Communicating (Number 60 in the CHOICE SERIES of learning units)

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WORKING GUIDE TO THIS UNIT IN YOUR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

This Unit is now your personal property - it's not for handing back to your training officer or to a tutor. It is your working book.

The Contents will increase in value to you each time you write on one of its pages. This is a working text for your personal notes - without notes its value is limited.

Qualifications forget about certificates and diplomas - you don't need them for this programme. What you do need is the wish:-

* to do your job better
* for personal development

Your study time is really up to you - we guess you will need about 8 hours in total. But it's your time - spend as long as you like.

How am I doing? you can judge for yourself by checking out how well you cope with the tasks we call Activities and Self Checks which occur throughout the unit. You can also get the Tutor Check and/or the Work Based Project to your tutor for an unbiased view of your progress.

Work Pace it's really up to you and depends on your interest. However, if you do well on the Activities and Self Checks, you could afford to speed up a little. Of course, if you don't do as well as you expect then you could slow down a little or flick back into the unit for a quick review of the more difficult ideas.

When in doubt - ask or seek help from:

* your family and friends
* colleagues at work
* your company training staff
* other open learners
* your tutor, by phone, by a visit to your support centre or by dropping your tutor a line through the post.

Don't worry if what you learn doesn't seem to be of use to you now, remember that times change - it may be useful one day. Anyway, just knowing more improves personal confidence.

So now make a start:-

60: COMMUNICATING by Steven Lane

ABOUT THIS UNIT

You are largely responsible for the behaviour and productivity of your workteam. So however you do your job, it's clear that you will do it by communicating.

This unit emphasises that being an effective communicator means being an effective SENDER and an effective RECEIVER of communications. For example, having SENT an instruction to someone you need to RECEIVE an assurance that it will be followed.

We therefore aim to develop the skills needed to be an effective two-way communicator.

IN THIS UNIT WE WILL:

* emphasise the importance of communication
* consider the principles involved in the communication process
* analyse the communication process to identify the features of communications planning
* explore the actual skills of conducting common forms of communicating

AUDIO TAPE Side 1

Before you continue through the unit, you should listen to side 1 of the audio tape that acccompanies the unit. You will find it useful if you refer to the unit objectives shown below whilst you listen to the tape. You may wish to make the objectives clearer to yourself by making a note or two on the page as you listen.

OBJECTIVES

When you've worked through this unit you will be BETTER ABLE to:

* understand the importance of communications to a Supervisor
* describe the communication process in terms of a communication model
* adopt a planned approach to communications
* apply the skills of written, spoken and behavioural communications more effectively at your workplace

PART A THE NATURE OF COMMUNICATION

1. Introduction

Wherever a number of people are organised in the day-to-day conduct of their duties - whether in the foundry of an ironworks, cleaners in an office block, technicians in a laboratory, or typists in a typing pool - it's likely that someone will be supervising them. Despite differences of work process or company size, supervisors are sure to have a number of things in common. To start with, they will be expected to have a sound working knowledge of the jobs they supervise and to have the behavioural skills that accompany this knowledge. But to be effective, all supervisors need more than this technical know-how and skill they share with the most experienced of their workgroup;

THEY HAVE TO BE ABLE TO SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE THAT WORKGROUP

To do this they need a range of management skills. One of the more important of these is EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION - this unit is about effective communication.

EXTENSION 1
page 43

This vital message is contained in a BBC video and although the words are different the message is the same -

WE MUST COMMUNICATE TO MANAGE

2. Three communication skills

To begin our study of communication let's look at the range of communication activities found in the workplace.

ACTIVITY 1
Time guide
5 mins

Jot down THREE types of communication you use at work.

Eg. Informing your workgroup of company policies, instructions and procedures.

1 _____

_____

2 _____

_____

3 _____

_____

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. Typical kinds of communications supervisors engage in: explain, instruct and monitor the activities of their workgroups; listen to ideas from workgroups about ways of improving the work process; write short reports or give verbal reportsfor management on production; fill out shift log-book entries; discuss with management changes in production methods; co-operate and consult with other supervisors; maintain and improve morale by keeping in close touch with members of their workgroups; deal with grievances and related problems as soon as they arise; maintain discipline and when necessary conduct disciplinary interviews; instruct and train new and transferred adult staff and apprentices.

If we now look back through our list we see that communication isn't really one skill, but THREE.

EXTENSION 2
page 43

ONE is WRITING SKILLS:

"fill out shift log-book entries"

"write short reports for management"

EXTENSION 3
page 43

ANOTHER is SPEAKING SKILLS (we include LISTENING here):

"explain and instruct"

"deal with grievances"

"listen to ideas from my workgroup about
about ways of improving the work process"

Other activities on the list have nothing to do with SPEAKING, LISTENING or WRITING and yet are very much to do with communication.

They are BEHAVIOURAL SKILLS:

"co-operate and consult
with other supervisors"

"set an example"

In this last grouping it's not what we SAY or WRITE but WHAT WE DO - hence our behaviour communicates. So communication is conducted by exercising three skills:

WRITING

SPEAKING

BEHAVING

These means are used to construct a process, call it a dialogue if you like, from which certain things happen. Let's see what a communication process is.

3. Communication Process

We have seen that communication is considered one of the management skills a supervisor needs to develop effectiveness at work. We've also discovered that communication is conducted by exercising one of three distinct skills, verbal (speaking and listening), written and behavioural.

But we still need to know more about communication itself, and what it involves. A good place to start is with the word - "communication".

ACTIVITY 2
Time guide
8 mins

Think about this word COMMUNICATION for a moment - then write down a few words or ideas which describes what you think COMMUNICATION means:

_____

_____

_____

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. Typical descriptions are: "the passing of information between two people"; "the transfer of ideas between two people or groups of people"; "the passing of instructions between people which leads to action"

REFERENCE 1
page 45

In the book "EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION" the author gives this definition:

"transferring of a thought or a message to another party so that it can be understood and acted upon".

There are many, many more descriptions to choose from each one with its own merit. One of the more useful descriptions is:

> **COMMUNICATION IS THE TRANSFER OF INFORMATION FROM ONE PERSON TO ANOTHER, RESULTING IN ACTION.**

Let's explore why this description or definition of the communication process is particularly useful.

3.1 A basic communication model

Our selected definition contains THREE features, all of which must be present for a communication to be complete, they are:

* INFORMATION

* PEOPLE

* ACTION

In other words,

* WE HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY,

* WE'RE DEALING WITH PEOPLE,

* WE WANT RESULTS FROM OUR COMMUNICATION

These THREE features - information, people, action - are common to all communication. They make up the PROCESS by which communication takes place. Using them, we can draw a model of the communication process:

INFORMATION passed between PEOPLE to result in ACTION

Let's take a detailed look at each of these THREE features and see what the implications are for supervisors and indeed for all those whose job is largely done by communications.

* **Our FIRST feature is INFORMATION:**

Let's explore what we mean by information through ideas arising from an actual incident:

ACTIVITY 3
Time guide
8 mins

Jack Mansell was supervisor of body assembly at Pacific Caravans Ltd. One morning he entered the glue and press bay, which was part of body assembly and saw Tim Powell working with adhesives without wearing his face mask or protective gloves. Jack wishes to inform Tim that he should be wearing these items. What should he say? Note down the words you might use:

_____

_____

_____

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. Many words may be used, but here are three possibilities we may consider: "Where's your mask and gloves, Tim?"; "Put on your mask and gloves, Tim!"; "I see you're not wearing your safety gear, Tim."

REFERENCE 2
page 45

In the book "SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT" the author writes of these kinds of spoken communication and gives certain distinctions and definitions which might be useful.

The FORM of each of the above communications is different. One asks a QUESTION, one is an ORDER and the third is simply a STATEMENT of the facts. But they all convey similar INFORMATION, however differently they express it. In other words, they all have the same SUBSTANCE. This is the important point -

INFORMATION IS THE SUBSTANCE OF WHAT WE COMMUNICATE

HOW we convey that SUBSTANCE depends on ourselves as people. Because people are different then the words and the forms of communication will also be different.

* Our SECOND feature is PEOPLE

As people we are influenced by a number of factors which relate to our past experience.

Consider the following case incident:

> John works in a large mail order office and is known to his supervisor as being work shy and always ready to complain about anything. June, on the other hand, is a high producer and is always ready to cooperate over any work plan changes.
>
> The supervisor has just set some work targets for some new equipment and asks John how he is getting on with these targets - John replies "The target's too high, I may make it for the odd half hour now and again, but there's no way anyone can keep up this pace regularly."
>
> When asked the same question June's reply is "Well I can't be sure yet but I am finding it difficult to stay up with targets for more than half-hour stretches - I think that others will be in the same boat."

Now the supervisor received pretty much the same INFORMATION from both John and June but will it be taken to MEAN the same? It is likely that our supervisor's past experience of John and June will have a strong influence over the MEANING of the INFORMATION - even though the information would seem to be the same.

So the supervisor might dismiss John's information as being one of his usual grumbles, but regard June's information as being genuine and worthy of investigation.

We could claim from this example that:

OUR ATTITUDE TO PROVIDERS OF INFORMATION WILL INFLUENCE THE MEANING WE GIVE TO THE INFORMATION

Our past experience then has a real influence on how we receive and regard the information. Sometimes past experience is so powerful it stops us hearing what is said in the present. Old battles between management and unions, can prevent new ideas being heard. Instead we hear the replay of an old record stored away inside our heads; "fixed opinions" and "engrained attitudes" can get our minds fixed, like the needle in a cracked record.

This can become a real problem at work. A workteam may, for example, resist a good idea simply because it comes from management.

Attitudes arising from past experience represent an important influence on communications.

We all like to think of ourselves as clear-headed, logical people.

PERHAPS WE ARE CLEAR-HEADED AND LOGICAL BUT THIS DOESN'T MEAN THAT WE BEHAVE SO ALL OF THE TIME

We often use points in an argument as if they logically support our opinions. Let's make this point clearer through some examples:

ACTIVITY 4
Time guide
5 mins

Tom Weatherill arrived late for his work as a storeman for the second day running. His supervisor pointed out his lateness and told him to make sure it didn't happen again. Tom replied: "I don't know what you're talking about, the lads over at maintenance come and go as they please!"

Now what Tom says may well be true - but it's an example of faulty thinking never the less.

What's wrong with Tom's point?

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. Tom does not work in the maintenance department. He is responsible to and under the authority of the Store's supervisor. Poor time keeping in one section doesn't excuse it in another, although it may tend to encourage it. In other words, Tom is talking about two separate issues. He may be doing this unintentionally. On the other hand, it might be a move on Tom's part to divert attention from his own lateness.

As supervisor in this situation we may wish to recognise that Tom's point has some truth to it. Indeed, we may take it up at a later interdepartmental meeting. But we must not let ourselves be diverted by it. We might well agree with the point he is trying to make - all employees should be treated equally and be governed by the same standards. The issue of different standards of discipline throughout a company is a real one. But that still leaves us with the problem of Tom's lateness.

Now let's take a look at our second case incident.

ACTIVITY 5
Time guide
5 mins

An outbreak of thieving from coats and lockers leads to some of the employees being questioned. After Chrissie Jones, a female packer, had been questioned, the Personnel Manager asked: "Wasn't she questioned last time we had an outbreak of petty thieving?"

"Yes", replied the trade union representative, "so were others. But no one was found responsible."

"Even so", continued the Personnel Manager, "I think we better talk to her again. It looks like there's a pattern here. After all there's no smoke without fire."

What's wrong with the Personnel Manager's thinking?

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. He claims to see a "pattern", but where is it? On a previous occasion Chrissie Jones was questioned. We have no evidence she was suspected and from what the union branch secretary said, we know others were questioned also. In his eagerness to sort out the matter the Personnel Manager is jumping to conclusions. Confused thinking is seen particularly in his last remark about "there's no smoke without fire". There, he is basing his thinking on a hackneyed saying rather than on real evidence.

The Personnel Manager is genuinely trying to solve a problem that occurs in every organisation from time to time, and we can recognise the need for a speedy solution. Thieving of personal possessions like this, seriously upsets morale, as well as being distressing to those who have had things taken. But his approach to the problem and to Chrissie Jones isn't very satisfactory.

Now our third case incident.

ACTIVITY 6
Time guide
8 mins

It is lunch time. A group of supervisors are sitting at a canteen table. One of them read from a newspaper a report of the Swedish car firm, Volvo. The report noted that Volvo cars are assembled by small teams, without a supervisor, building whole cars between them as opposed to working on assembly lines. They are free to plan their own work schedules and choose their own tasks.

Dick, one of the supervisors, says, "You know, I've often thought my men could be usefully given more scope than I allow them."

Another, Steve, replies, "So you'd be like Volvo, eh, let your men do whatever they like?"

"I didn't say that."

"Come off it," retorts Steve, "you can't have your cake and eat it. Either you're in favour of complete freedom or you're not. Be consistent!"

What's wrong with Steve's thinking?

_____

_____

_____

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. It's surprising how often this type of arguement succeeds. What Steve has done is to deny that there can be any reasonable position between two extremes Dick had suggested was that his men could cope with more than the little freedom he presently allows them. But Steve then forces him to choose between this and total freedom. If Steve allows himself to be pushed to this extreme he is going to find it hard to support his argument - and complete freedom wasn't his argument in the first place!

EXTENSION 4
page 43

From these incidents we can identify THREE examples of FAULTY THINKING:

DIVERTING ATTENTION AWAY FROM THE PROPER GROUNDS

JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS

IGNORING THE MIDDLE GROUND BETWEEN EXTREMES

* **The THIRD feature of our communication model is ACTION.**

ACTION IS THE RESULT OF THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE OR GROUPS OF PEOPLE.

The action may be something we can observe. For example, we ask a clerk to remove a file from a filing cabinet. The action occurs when the instruction is carried out. We can observe this, or notice later that the file has been removed. However, not all actions can be observed.

Consider, for example, the case where a family business is 'taken over' by a large national organisation. On being told of this, the employees cannot ACT upon the information but ACTION still occurs. In this case people now realise their company has changed hands - they now know new facts.

We can therefore decide that:

CHANGES IN THE MIND ARE ACTIONS EVERY BIT AS MUCH AS CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR

So far we have defined communication as involving :

THE PASSING OF INFORMATION FROM ONE PERSON TO ANOTHER, RESULTING IN ACTION

We have also drawn a model of a communication PROCESS which sets out three of its features:

where:

* **INFORMATION** - the substance of what we communicate, however we express it.

* **PEOPLE** - attitudes developed from past experience, influence how we communicate and how we receive others' communications.

* **ACTION** - people may change behaviour by doing things OR by changing their ways of thinking and the knowledge they have.

3.2 Communication Feedback

So far, we have tackled the question, "what is communication?". From our discusson we discovered that communication has three features, INFORMATION, PEOPLE, ACTION. Using the three elements we were able to draw a model of a communication process. Let's check out the usefulness of this model in a real case:

ACTIVITY 7
Time guide
10 mins

Atmoprint is a successful firm in the print industry. They currently have more orders than they can easily cope with. An important rush printing order has just come in. Jean, the supervisor, decides to give this job to Margaret. She takes Margaret to the print room and explains how to operate the machine. She then gives Margaret the details of the order and leaves her to get on with it.

One hour later she realises Margaret is still in the print room when she should have finished much earlier. Rushing down, Jean discovers the order is not even half completed and that Margaret is staring unhappily at the machine which is not running.

Look at our Communication Model:

INFORMATION passed between PEOPLE to result in ACTION

Although Jean did all that this model contains - it's now clear that she neglected a FOURTH feature of the process, which is not yet in our model.

Jot down what Jean could have done which would have helped avoid this problem:

_____

_____

_____

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. The information was passed on, Margaret heard what her supervisor told her, but the outcome was INACTION and an uncompleted order. Clearly, something had gone wrong. But it took a wasted hour and a spoilt order to discover this. Jean could have told Margaret her whereabouts and that she was to be contacted immediately if any problems arose. Jean could, of course, have asked Margaret if she was happy to continue or she could have waited to make sure Margaret could manage.

In other words, communicating according to our THREE feature model would neglect two crucial questions:

* **How do we - the SENDER - know the other person - the RECEIVER - understands our instructions?**

* **How confident are we the task will be carried out efficiently?**

The answers to these questions cannot be left to chance - as they were in the case study. As senders, we need to obtain information BACK from the receiver that lets us know whether our information has been fully understood. The technical term for this is - FEEDBACK.

FEEDBACK HELPS TO MADE SURE THAT OUR COMMUNICATION WILL PRODUCE THE REQUIRED RESULT

Getting feedback is important, but it isn't always easy. There's a skill to it. This can be demonstrated by looking again at our case incident involving Jean and Margaret.

ACTIVITY 8
Time guide
5 mins

Jean, the supervisor, decides to give this job to Margaret. She takes Margaret to the printing room and explains how to operate the machine.

Suggest how Jean could check out that her instructions have been understood. Jot down an idea or two:

_____

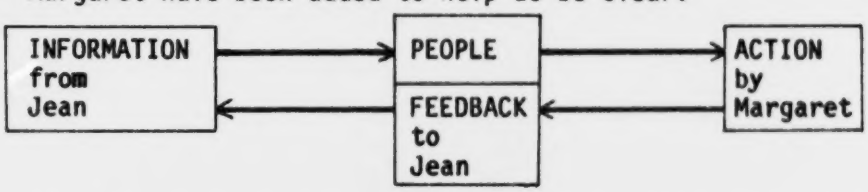
_____

_____

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. One way Jean could have tackled this would be by getting Margaret to work the machine and check that she was operating it correctly. This gets direct FEEDBACK from the ACTION. It's a sure way to check out that the machine could be operated correctly by Margaret.

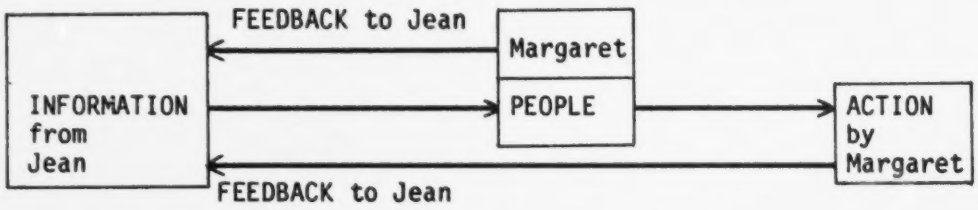
Let's put this FEEDBACK into our earlier communication model - Jean and Margaret have been added to help us be clear:

EXTENSION 5
page 44



If Jean had asked Margaret if she understood what was being explained and whether she could do what was being asked of her, then Margaret's reply would be the FEEDBACK. In this case, the feedback doesn't come from the ACTION but comes from the PERSON.

We can put this FEEDBACK into our communication model:



So, we have TWO kinds of FEEDBACK - PERSON feedback and ACTION feedback. This feedback will help Jean to CHECK OUT whether her communication was effective -

* **that it was understood**
* **that the required action will follow.**

We may see that ACTION feedback gives us a very efficient checkout that our communication has been effective. However, PERSON feedback is more of a problem - in our example Margaret could have told Jean that she understood when, in fact, she didn't! So, to get this type of feedback effectively we need to be able to ask the right type of questions.

If Jean had followed her instructions with a phrase like

* "Is that clear?"

* "Do you follow me?"

* "Any questions on that one?"

it may not have provided the proper feedback to improve the quality of the communication.

Margaret could answer "Yes" to the first two questions and "No" to the third. No one likes to seem slow or incapable - instead we might say, "Yes, that's clear" and go away and try to fathom it out for ourselves. Or we ask someone else, who probably has no clearer idea than we do. At best, this wastes time, at worst, we run the risk of injury or spoilt materials, damaged tools and delays. Much more useful to use phrases like:

* "Shall we go through that again?"

Here we can guide the person through the job again, helping them out where they have difficulty. Or, we could ask:

* **"OK tell me how you're going to do the job."**

you then check out their understanding of your message. Or,

* **"Now what's the most important point again?"**

This prompts them to give their account - so you can checkout.

These more useful questions have one important thing in common. They cannot be answered with a simple "Yes" or "No". Each of them requires the other person to provide evidence, by retelling or restating, that they really do understand what is required of them.

The important point we seem to be making is - when asking questions to get good feedback we should not ask questions that can be answered simply yes or no. We should ask questions or make remarks which prompts the receiver:

TO TALK OVER THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE MESSAGE

or:

TO SAY IN THEIR OWN WORDS WHAT THEY NOW INTEND TO DO

Let's round off our look at feedback:

SELF CHECK 1
Time guide
5 mins

1 Jot down our two kinds of feedback:

* _____

* _____

2 Which TWO of the following questions are likely to prompt USEFUL feedback?

a) Do you understand?

b) Have you any questions to ask me about this?

c) Can you tell me how you're going to do this job?

d) Is that clear?

The answer to this self check is here is the following words, so you'll need to check out your answers carefully: 1) Our two types of feedback are action feedback and person feedback; 2) have you any questions to ask me about this, and, can you tell me how you're going to do this job; Perhaps c) is a better way than b), although b) could be answered 'No' the wording seems encouraging. The other questions a) and d) can be answered "Yes", or "No" - people may answer "yes" because they fear seeming silly or incompetent if they admit they don't understand.

4 Planning Communications

Let's look at some ideas for planning effective communication. The amount of effort we put into planning our communications depends on a number of factors. A crucial one is the amount of time available. We're all aware that we could make a better job of this if we had the time to sit back, reflect and plan. But the realities of supervision rarely allow this luxury.

ACTIVITY 9
Time guide
5 mins

Write down some of the things that would influence the amount of time you take to plan your communications.

eg My own knowledge and experience

* _____

* _____

* _____

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. Points we would probably agree on would be: the importance of the task; the seriousness of a communication failure; the other person's knowledge and experience; how well we know the other person; the complexity of the information to be communicated.

This list refers directly to the three features of our communication model: INFORMATION, PEOPLE, ACTION. The first one in our list concerns INFORMATION; the next two concern PEOPLE and the last concerns ACTION. In considering planning for communication these three communication elements should be included - perhaps your responses also concern all three parts of our model.

4.1 Considerations in Planning: What, Who, How

We've agreed that the extent to which we plan or prepare our communications is influenced by a number of factors including the time available. But do we always need to plan? - does even the SIMPLEST order need some planning, some thinking about? The following case incident raises this question:

Robbie Dent was a supervisor in a firm manufacturing haulage gear to the mining industry. It was winter and a couple of the men in Robbie's section were off with 'flu.

Robbie noticed an oil patch across a gangway. As there weren't many men in, and the tank section wasn't manned that morning, it wasn't an immediate hazard. But it needed seeing to. He said so to Dougie, a newcomer to the company.

"There's some oil across the gangway up there, Dougie"

Dougie looked up from his task and wiped his hands on a cloth.

"Aye, could be nasty that" Dougie agreed.

"That's right" Robbie said, "it'll have to be cleaned up."

Just then Robbie was called over to the offices to sort out some order forms. While there, word came through that there had been an accident on Robbie's section. Nothing serious, but someone who had arrived late had slipped and sprained his wrist. He'd be off for the rest of the week.

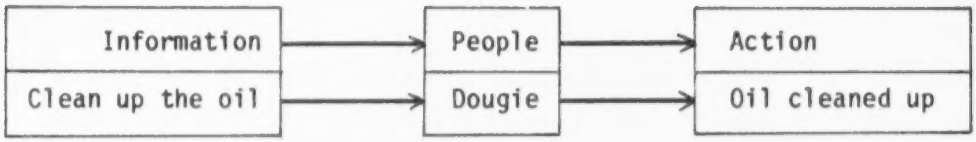
Robbie was furious. The accident had been casued by the oil patch. He went over to Dougie:

"I told you to clean it up!" he said angrily.

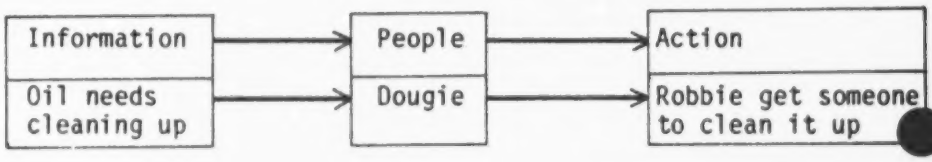
"No you didn't!" Dougie replied. "If you had, I'd have done it. You were only warning me about it."

Using our communication model, the communications in our incident could look like this:

* from Robbie's view:



* from Dougie's view:



In this incident there was a communication failure. Let's explore the possible causes:

ACTIVITY 10
Time guide
5 mins

We could perhaps argue that the failure of this communication was due to one of a number of causes. Jot down what you think these might be.

eg Dougie thought he was being INFORMED rather than INSTRUCTED

* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. Other possible causes of failure: Dougie is being deliberately awkward; Robbie didn't checkout by prompting feedback, either person or action; Robbie forgot to instruct due to being interrupted; Robbie treated Dougie as an "old hand" when he was in fact a "newcomer"

We could develop our ideas a little more by attending to one of these possible sources of failure:

* Robbie treated Dougie as an "old hand" when, in fact, he was a "newcomer".

Because other people on his section knew Robbie better than Dougie, would they have acted upon this information?

Let's assume that they would - that's why Robbie didn't prepare his communication properly. He didn't attend to PEOPLE. If he had, the sprained wrist might have been avoided. In other words,

ALL COMMUNICATIONS NEED SOME PLANNING, BUT IT NEED NOT BE A LENGTHY PROCESS.

A useful way to plan is to use THREE questions;

WHAT? WHO? HOW?

which could form a 3-POINT PLANNING MODEL. Had Robbie used this model he could have asked:

WHAT What am I communicating?

* **The DANGER of the oil and the NEED to have it cleaned up.**

WHO Who am I communicating to?

* **A 'NEWCOMER' - Dougie.**

HOW How do I ensure that Dougie acts?

* **Give an ORDER or INSTRUCTION.**

So Robbie hadn't thought about WHO he was communicating to. You will also see that had Robbie attended to FEEDBACK then he would have been alerted to Dougie's intention not to clear up the oil.

SELF CHECK 2
Time guide
3 mins

Note down the three keywords in our 3-point planning model.

* WHAT
* _____
* _____

The answer to this self check is here is the following words, so you'll need to check out your answers carefully. The three keywords in our 3 point planning model are: what, who and how. They serve to remind us that we need to think about what we are going to communicate, who we are communicating to, and how we are going to communicate.

To use this planning model would have only required a moment's thought on Robbie's part. Planning doesn't always have to take a lot of time -

A MOMENT'S PLANNING CAN PROVE WORTHWHILE

5 Summary

The three main workplace communication skills are:

WRITING SPEAKING BEHAVING

Our basic communication model is:

INFORMATION passed between PEOPLE to result in ACTION

where:

* INFORMATION - the SUBSTANCE of the communication
* PEOPLE - PAST EXPERIENCE and ATTITUDES influence communication
* ACTION - what we DO and what we THINK

FEEDBACK enables a sender to CHECK OUT the receiver's understanding and intention.

FEEDBACK comes from two sources:

* from the Action itself - ACTION feedback
* from the Person - PERSON feedback

Our 3-point planning model for communication is:

WHAT? - What do I want to communicate?

WHO? - Who am I communicating to?

HOW? - How can I ensure action?

PART B THE SKILLS OF COMMUNICATION

1. Introduction

In this part of the Unit we will consider in detail our three communications skills developed earlier. These are the skills of WRITTEN, SPOKEN and BEHAVIOURAL communication. Each will be dealt with in some detail. There are other means of communicating, for instance, pictures, graphs etc but our three skills form the vast bulk of likely communications at work.

2 Writing skills

As a supervisor there will certainly be times when you are called upon to communicate in writing. This may be an entry in a log of some sort - often used to pass on messages from one shift to another. You could be asked to rush off a few notes for your manager or write a clear brief account of an accident or incident which has occurred on your section.

Whatever writing we may do, it must be effective in communicating our message and intention. Therefore we need to be aware of the demands that written communication makes on writers and readers alike. One way of discovering these is to explore some additional features of written communications to those we explored using our earlier communication model.

For example, it's quite usual to communicate in writing in a way quite different to speech.

We might WRITE - "It has been brought to my attention"

but might SAY - "I've been told"

But why do we do this? Our aim, based upon our communication model, is to tell something, INFORMATION, to someone, PEOPLE, so they can act on what we have written, ACTION. This, as in all communication, is our overriding aim.

So:

WE MUST ENSURE WHAT WE WRITE CAN BE EASILY READ AND UNDERSTOOD BY WHOEVER READS IT

In a work environment where time is in short supply, the written word is more likely to be effective if it is ACCURATE, BRIEF and CLEAR.

WE'LL CALL THIS OUR A-B-C OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Let's be clear about what our A-B-C means:

ACCURATE — the reader or receiver will be able to act upon what is read, because facts, etc are correct. It's no good asking a customer to pick up goods at 4.00 if they will not be ready until 5.00!

BRIEF — A written communication must always contain the essential information it is advisable to keep to this essential information and cut out the extras. This helps to ensure that the reader will read it. Lengthy communications are tiring and mostly boring to read. The longer a communication is, the more likely people are to misunderstand due to lack of concentration.

CLEAR — this helps the reader to understand what is being communicated. It's no good writing:

"I think that order number 837/1 is needed for lunch time Thursday" - it's too vague, for example what time is "lunch time" and is the order needed by then or not?

ACTIVITY 11
Time guide
8 mins

Rewrite this last message about order number 837/1 in a way which is more clear:

* _____

_____

_____

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. Obviously there could be many versions. For instance it could be written: "Order number 837/1 must be completed and ready for despatch by 12.00 on Thursday, 8 February 1984."; or "Order 837/1 is needed for 12.00 this Thursday."

Versions like this are clear in that they leave no room for doubt about what action is required.

A note about Feedback

In face-to-face communication we get PERSON feedback - visual and spoken - about what we say at the time. This allows us to alter and restate the message as we go along - we 'fit' our communication to the receiver. This isn't possible in written communication - the reader is out of the sight of the writer, therefore:

WE MUST HAVE THE READER CLEARLY IN MIND

This will go someway to COMPENSATE for the absence of PERSON feedback Our section on planning made this clear. When we have the reader in mind we can anticipate and avoid any difficulties.

SELF CHECK 3
Time guide
8 mins

Respond to this statement by writing TRUE or FALSE in the space provided.

1 When we communicate in writing we should write more 'formally', eg, writing "The position regarding the supply of raw materials is deteriorating" rather than "we are getting low on raw materials".

_____

2 The A-B-C of written communication reminds us that when we write we should be:

A _____

B _____

C _____

3 Why is it important to "HAVE THE READER CLEARLY IN MIND" when preparing written communications.

_____

_____

_____

The answer to this self check is here is the following words, so you'll need to check out your answers carefully: 1) False, our ideas on writing whould be related to our intention as a communicator. This means intelligent use of the communication model and careful planning, Notions of 'formal' writing are usually based on half-remembered, taught English from our school days and are unlikely to be of much use at work; 2) Accurate - being factually correct, Brief - stressing the vital parts of the message, Clear - leaving no room for doubt; 3) It will help us to "tailor" the communication to them: to their difficulties and capabilities. This is so for all forms of communication, but in writing it's even more important - you will not be there when they read your message to deal with personal difficulties over understandings and actions.

3 Speaking Skills

REFERENCE 3 page 45

In the book "EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION" the author claims "In English we have not one but two languages, the written form and the spoken form . . . ".

Most of us will naturally give a good deal of thought to what we write - unfortunately, this is not as true for spoken communication. We tend to be more casual and often use spoken communication when we are short of time.

In the planning stage we discussed the importance of planning everyday spoken communications, and develped a useful method of planning that's suitable for routine orders and instructions. Since we spend the majority of our time as communicators using speech rather than writing it is obvious that we need to give proper attention to developing this skill. It's equally important that we don't forget the need to LISTEN to others.

THE SUCCESS OF ANY SPOKEN COMMUNICATION DEPENDS AS MUCH ON THE LISTENER AS THE SPEAKER

By recalling our basic communication model we appreciate that when speaking we need to be aware of the ACTION we wish to result from our communication.

Even so, communications may still fail even when the action required is clearly stated. Let's look at an actual example - see if you can spot why the communication was not successful:

A certain component repeatedly failed in use. Part of the component was a chemical highly reactive to the salt and greases commonly found on the human skin. In an attempt to overcome this, the people were advised not to touch the chemical with their hands. Scoops were provided. For a short time this had solved the problem. But then the number of component failures started to increase again! An investigation showed that the people had stopped using the scoops. Because there were no harmful effects from contact with the chemical and since it was easier to use their hands, they had reverted to this method.

It became clear that the people came to ignore the instruction because they weren't given the reason for it. Without being given the correct reason they had assumed the chemical was dangerous to the skin, rather than being told that the skin contaminated the chemical!

So we are reminded that

PEOPLE USUALLY RESPOND BETTER IF THEY UNDERSTAND THE REASON FOR AN ORDER OR INSTRUCTION

Spoken communication is more prone to errors of this kind because we treat them more casually than written communication. So when thinking about spoken communication try:

PUTTING YOURSELF IN THE LISTENER'S PLACE

and anticipate how you would FEEL and what you would DO on hearing your spoken message.

We might take advantage of our earlier ideas on written communications - the A-B-C of communication. This A-B-C equally applies to speaking as it does to writing.

Let's see how this applies:

ACCURATE : it is as well to admit the truth here - we are generally less careful about spoken communications than we are when we use writing. One reason may be that we can deny having said something, but we can hardly deny having written it. We may also say "I know I said that, but what I meant was . . . ". In other words we can correct or repair the initial faulty communication.

This example should tell us that when speaking we need to:

BE CAREFUL AND ACCURATE ABOUT THE MEANING OF WHAT WE SAY

BRIEF : we normally speak around 150 words per minute - more often faster when we are in a hurry or when we are excited! So in a one minute instruction session we can say a lot of words - chances are that about 30 of the words were essential and 20 more were useful - the other 100 may not only be wasted but they also may cause confusion. Longer messages are also harder to remember and recall.

BEING BRIEF HELPS AVOID CONFUSION AND HELPS RECALL

CLEAR : if we choose our words carefully so that we ACCURATELY express what we want and we are BRIEF so as not to confuse, then is that not enough? Well, nearly but not quite. We may find our own messages very clear and easy to understand - but others may not. It is our task as communicators to:

USE WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS IN A WAY WHICH IS CLEAR TO OTHERS

ACTIVITY 12
Time guide
5 mins

The supervisor of a typing pool says to a new starter:

"The company likes their typists to be smart and well dressed"

Is this message clear? Jot down your ideas below.

* _____

_____

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. Perhaps we need to clarify what is meant by the Company - after all who is going to pass comment if they are not well dressed? The answer must be - the supervisor will - so why not say so? Because of a more relaxed attitude to dress, what does "well dressed" really mean? There is so much variety of fashion so there are bound to be many versions of what "well dressed" means. However difficult, the supervisor must find a way to be clearer. The supervisor could tell the new starter to look at the way others are dressed as examples of what is acceptable.

We could not adequately cover SPOKEN communication without attending to the act of LISTENING. Let's do this now:

REFERENCE 4
page 45

In the book "EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION" the author claims: "You will not listen effectively if you have something on your mind".

At the start of this section we made the point that effective SPOKEN communication involves LISTENING as well as speaking. In this next activity we can examine what it is that a 'good listener' does to be a 'good listener':

ACTIVITY 13
Time guide
5 mins

Jot down THREE things that 'good listeners' do.

eg they genuinely listen for the SUBSTANCE of the communication

* _____

* _____

* _____

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. Typical examples of what good listeners do are: They show they are listening by looking at the sender; They ask questions to make sure that they understand; They let the sender make their points fully; They explain what they have understood by the message.

There may be other items not listed here.

Before moving on to our third form of communication a point about our use of certain words will prove valuable.

The use of descriptive words, words like "large", "heavy", "firmly", present certain difficulties. We often use these words as though they have a precise meaning, when they don't!

Here are some examples of words and descriptions that are not precise:

"Remove when BRIGHT pink"

"Hit the arm with a LIGHT tap"

"Press in LIGHTLY"

"Allow to boil for a FEW minutes"

Descriptions like these require judgement and need backing up with demonstration and closely monitored practice. Used on their own they are of limited use. Where they could be made precise we should do so, for example "boil for three minutes". If we leave it up to the listener to judge we should ensure that they are able to make sound judgements.

EXTENSION 6
page 44

This is our THIRD form of communication and it occurs for example when an IMPRESSION is created by the BEHAVIOUR and APPEARANCE of someone. It is what we judge to be so on watching someone behave.

When we use the term behavioural communication we exclude written and spoken communication, although they may be a part of the overall communication that occurs. For example, we may cross our arms over our chest, shake our head and say "No, I"m not going to"! Here, spoken and behavioural communication take place at the same time. But, when we discuss behavioural communication here, we will ignore the words spoken and so keep our discussion to behaviour only.

Although our view of behavioural communication involves neither the spoken nor the written word, it still matches our basic communication model. A simple example should demonstrate this.

ACTIVITY 14
Time guide
5 mins

It is the end of the morning teabreak. Peter Smith, supervisor of the section, has had tea with his workteam. He looks at the clock on the wall, checks his watch, places his mug on the tray and goes about his business. As he does this other men finish their tea and resume work. Within two minutes they are all back at work.

Think about Peter Smith's behaviour in terms of our communication model:

1) What information did he communicate?

2) Why did the people he communicated to respond?

3) What action did he expect from them as a result of his communication?

Jot down your thoughts to each question.

1 _____

_____

2 _____

_____

3 _____

_____

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. We could note that: Peter communicated the end of the tea-break; his workteam responded by returning to work because he was the supervisor setting the example by his behaviour; he expected them to follow his example and return to work.

It is possible that the men might ignore his behavioural "message". For instance when an atmosphere of cooperation and teamwork is strong Peter's behavioural communication is likely to be successful. On the other hand, if the operatives felt less cooperative they might continue sipping their tea until he told them to "get back to work!" - in fact, they probably wouldn't be drinking tea with him in the first place!

This incident introduces us to behavioural communications.

BEHAVIOURAL COMMUNICATIONS GOES ON ALL THE TIME, IT IS EVER PRESENT

Unlike spoken or written communication which are based on intended action, behavioural communication includes elements of unintentional action, which means it is not always under our absolute control.

So:

When we communicate by SPEAKING we intend to:

when we communicate in WRITING we intend to;

but when we communicate BEHAVIOURALLY we MAY NOT intend to!

In other words as long as we can be seen by others then we are communicating something. Because we may be seen in our unguarded moments we may be communicating things we do not wish to communicate.

Let's look at BEHAVIOURAL communication in practice.

SELF CHECK 4
Time guide
5 mins

Jean Marston is supervisor of a typing pool. On this particular day, Jean noticed that, while the rest of the girls busy, Mary Snowdon is typing very slowly. Jean decides to find out if there is anything the matter.

1) Which ONE of the following is most correct:

Why did Jean think something might be wrong? Was it because of:

a) what Mary said

b) what Mary did

c) what Mary wrote

d) one of the girls told her

2) Respond to the following statement by writing TRUE or FALSE in the space provided.

"Mary may have had no idea that she had 'told' her supervisor something was wrong."

_____

The answer to this self check is here is the following words, so you'll need to check out your answers carefully: 1) What Mary did, Jean noticed that Mary was working more slowly than usual. These things had alerted Jean to the possibility that something was wrong; 2) true, Mary may not have known she was communicating to her supervisor that something was wrong. Her communication was probably unintentional.

In this case incident we see an example of behavioural communication that was **UNINTENTIONAL**. Let's look at another example of behavioural communication - this time **INTENTIONAL** and using APPEARANCE, which is a form of behavioural communication.

ACTIVITY 16
Time guide
3 mins

Bob Brown was appointed supervisor of the porters after three years at Denwitch Hospital. The first morning in his new position he turned up in the porters' room and chatted to the men as usual while they all got ready for work. But when Bob put on his white uniform it reminded them that Bob was now the supervisor.

1 Bob's uniform was white because

a) He'd taken his overalls home and washed them

b) They were brand new

c) They were his badge of office

See how close our thinking is by comparing your responses to the responses that I make in the following words. They were his badge of office; white uniforms were worn by all supervisors and were a different colour to those worn by the porters. The message the uniform communicated was "supervisor". Uniforms are a common form of behavioural communication. They tell us who has authority. Personalised parking spaces are another form of behavioural communication. They communicate that people occupying certain positions in the company are given special status and recognition.

We could become more aware of what behavioural communication is, and how this can be utilised in the everyday activities of a supervisor. For example, we may tell our workteam that we are interested in them as individuals and that we wish to encourage their initiatives and participation. But if, when they try and talk to us, we repeatedly give the impression of being too busy, they'll soon stop trying. Our behaviour will speak more loudly than our words.

We can only develop an awareness of our behaviour and its communication consequences by thinking about what we do, and thinking about other people's behaviour and what it communicates to us.

Being able to "read" other people's behaviour is an essential skill for any supervisor. Remember our case study of Jean and Margaret in the typing pool? There the supervisor was able to sort out the problem early on because she had "read" the typist's behaviour. If she hadn't, what would have happened? Well, at the least, the girl Mary would have continued working slowly. So her output would have declined, meaning more work for others.

We can claim then that:

BEHAVIOURAL COMMUNICATIONS OFTEN SIGNALS A PROBLEM THAT NEEDS TO BE DEALT WITH

Marked changes in behaviour, particularly a fall in performance, are often signs that someone has a problem. We need to spot this as soon as possible.

For example, a pleasant, punctual, hardworking machinist changes overnight - she arrives late on two consecutive days, she is surly and although her work rate remains the same, faults increase significantly. It's clear that something is wrong, her behaviour tells us this. The attention of her supervisor is now essential.

Other symptoms of discontent are expressions of AGGRESSIVENESS or DEFENSIVENESS. Where these occur, the underlying cause might well be due to feelings of threat or of being under pressure. These feelings might be expressed as aggressive or defensive behaviour as the employee attempts to cope with this difficulty.

For example, when under pressure stress might cause us to:

* Become **AGGRESSIVE** - perhaps assuming the "old style" boss approach; becoming rude, surly and strict.

* Become **DEFENSIVE** - hiding behind paperwork; trying to hide mistakes, or being absent from work.

We need to "read" these communications and find out the source of any threat or pressure - are there rumours of redundancy going round, for example? Does the operative have a grievance that hasn't been brought out in the open? Reading behavioural communications correctly is the first step to the remedy of a problem. Failing to read them, or reading them wrongly, will allow the situation to worsen.

Let's look at those ideas in a practical setting now, by tackling the following case incident.

SELF CHECK 5
Time guide
8 mins

Harry Wrath is a skilled turner. About six months ago the company made half the workforce redundant, due to new technology. Harry was one of those to go! Fortunately, he got a new job quickly and settled in well - he enjoyed working for his new firm. After four months, he and others were informed by their supervisor that the firm was to introduce the new technology. This was needed to remain competitive. The supervisor made it clear that Harry and the others WOULD NOT LOSE THEIR JOBS. Indeed, the new technology would benefit them in terms of increased pay and improved working conditions.

Harry's attitude to his work began to deteriorate. His supervisor found him surly and difficult to handle. Harry tried to persuade the union branch to oppose the introduction of the new technology. When this wasn't accepted Harry became even more difficult. His work suffered further. He became increasingly argumentative and unpleasant.

1 Respond to this statement by writing TRUE or FALSE in the space provided:

Harry Wrath's behaviour is now aggressive and is due to his past experience of new technology.

2 Put a mark against your choice.

If you were Harry's supervisor would you;

(a) ignore his behaviour

(b) tell him to pull himself together

(c) talk with him about his opposition

(d) report him to your manager.

The answer to this self check is here is the following words, so you'll need to check out your answers carefully: 1) True, we know he lost his last job when new technology was introduced. This is obviously still on his mind; 2 Talk with him about his opposition, this way you can find out the background to his apparent opposition. Listening to him will communicate that you are concerned about him. The supervisor, or higher management, may be able to provide fuller information on the new technology proposals. All these will help to reassure and help return his behaviour to normal.

5 Summary

Our three communications SKILLS are:

WRITING - brief reports

SPEAKING - including LISTENING

BEHAVING - setting an example

We found the A-B-C idea useful for SPOKEN and WRITTEN communication:

ACCURATE - if you are not sure then admit it

BRIEF - do not confuse with unneccessary detail

CLEAR - use words and ideas simply

Because we are likely to be face-to-face when speaking to someone we have an excellent chance to use:

FEEDBACK - though it needs careful prompting - simply asking questions is usually not enough

In written communications to get:

FEEDBACK - we can check on the results of the communication

PUT YOURSELF IN THE LISTENER'S PLACE - is difficult advice to follow, but could prove useful when planning communications.

BEHAVIOURAL COMMUNICATIONS - is the impression we create in the minds of others by our appearance and actions.

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE - Being part of the management team we should always set a good example - we can hardly expect others to behave well, if we don't do so ourselves.

PART C PERFORMANCE CHECKS

1 End Check

Time guide 60 mins

You may review your understanding of the Unit as a whole by completing this group of questions. DON'T GUESS THE ANSWERS - if you're not sure, flick back into the Unit and check before responding.

If you are still unsure then put a question mark against your response before proceeding.

TRUE/FALSE

Respond to each statement by writing TRUE or FALSE in the space provided.

1 Spoken communication does not need to be planned. _____

2 We should use our three point planning model "WHAT, WHO, HOW" for all communications. _____

3 People have attitudes which have developed from their past experiences. _____

4 Feedback is not part of our communication model. _____

5 Information is the substance of what we communicate. _____

6 Setting a good example is a behavioural communication. _____

7 Fixed opinions and engrained attitudes don't really affect communications. _____

8 An atmosphere of cooperation and of teamwork helps communications to be effective. _____

COMPLETION

Respond by completing each sentence with a suitable word or words.

9 Our 3-point planning model asks three questions, WHAT, _____ and HOW.

10 Effective writing means being _____, Brief and Clear.

11 Our three communication skills are speaking, writing and _____.

12 Aggressive and defensive behaviour are symptoms of _____.

13 Listeners should genuinely listen for the _____ of the communication.

14 A marked change of behaviour is an example of _____ communication.

15 Feedback comes from people and from _____.

16 Behavioural communication is unlike spoken and written communications in that it is _____ present.

17 Setting a good example is a form of _____ communications.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Respond to each question by putting a mark against the ONE answer which is most correct.

18 Which ONE of the following is most likely to gain helpful feedback:

(a) "That's simple enough, isn't it?"

(b) "OK, any questions?"

(c) "So, what are you going to do?"

(d) "Now, do you want me to go over it all again?"

19 When listening to a spoken communication which ONE of the following behaviours is most effective:

(a) write notes on what's being said

(b) keep quiet and listen

(c) indicate by gestures where we understand and ask questions where we don't

(d) interrupt with alternative suggestions

20 Which ONE of the following features IS NOT in our communication model.

(a) feedback

(b) attitudes

(c) people

(d) action

21 Which ONE of the following is the best description of FEEDBACK.

(a) information from the receiver about the message

(b) when the sender repeats the message

(c) background noise when speaking

(d) questions put to receivers by the sender

22 Which ONE of the following was included in our three examples of faulty thinking.

(a) making assumptions

(b) jumping to conclusions

(c) bias

(d) arguing

23 Which ONE of the following best describes the communication process.

(a) informing someone of your idea

(b) the passing of information between two people

(c) passing on a message to someone

(d) the passing of information between people resulting in action

24 Which ONE of the following is the best way to ensure the correct action.

(a) communicate after careful planning

(b) instruct someone to do it

(c) suggest to someone that the action is needed

(d) give a straight, direct order

25 Which ONE of the following is a CLEAR instruction

(a) "the stores are waiting for the job"

(b) "as soon as you've finished that job, the stores want it"

(c) "can you get that job to the stores for 5.00?"

(d) "this job is urgent, if there is any hold up - make sure you tell me straightaway"

END CHECK - Checkout

Audio Tape
Side 2
Time guide
35 mins

The answers and explanations for these End Checks are on Side 2 of our Audio Tape. Have your responses with you as you play this tape. As you listen you can check out how well you have done and make notes as you proceed.

2 Tutor Check

Time guide 60 mins

Read the following case incident, then deal with the accompanying questions.

Case Incident

The Fuss at Kay's

The past year had been a little unsettled in Kay's Castings. During the year a number of rumours have arisen about the company's future. One rumour hinted to an expansion of the labour force only to be followed shortly after by another about redundancy. The latest rumour, which arose from the current wage negotiations, suggests that Kay's is to be taken over by a larger group of companies. This rumour has been denied by Kay's management as quite ill-founded.

Over the past week or two, the Personnel Office has been preparing for a visit by a group of City Stockbrokers. These visits are quite common and help the 'City' to keep in touch with companies in whose shares they are dealing.

There really is nothing sinister in the visit, but rumours soon begun to get around. On the day of the visit Kays's directors are out in full force - each of them show their group of visitors round the factory.

Paul Dunn is a long serving and loyal member of the workforce - he is also one of the Trade Union shop stewards. He normally acts very sensibly and calmly, but right now he is acting very aggressively. Although he had been informed about the purpose of the visit, he storms into his manager's office - "What's really going on with this visit?! I asked a couple of them what they are here for and couldn't get any sense out of them!"

Jim Dale, the manager, was already having an anxious time keeping production going whilst at the same time attempting to impress his Directors and visitors. His reply was quite short - "Look Paul, you were told six weeks ago what the visit was for! These people can make or break a company like ours. The last thing they want to see is your machine idle! - so why not get back to your job and leave me to get back to mine."

Paul returned to his machine angry and worried. When tea break came, Paul took the opportunity to work off his anger at Jim and the visitors, by grumbling to his mates. After a while the whole section was angry and worried. The result was that whenever the opportunity arose, they stood around and angrily talked with each other. A lot of this took place around the doors of the washroom and had begun to interfere with the access to Jim Dale's office.

You only need to write ONE or TWO sentences against each question.

1 List TWO likely causes of the rumours.

2 Why does Paul Dunn deserve better treatment from his manager than he actually received?

3 Show how our 3-point planning model WHAT, WHO, HOW would have improved Jim Dale's communication to Paul Dunn. ONE or TWO sentences against each point is all that is required -

4 What was the Feedback that Jim Dale appeared to ignore?

Send to tutor

Now get your answers to your study tutor either by post or handing it over personally. You will receive your tutor's assessment and comment back through the post as soon as can be managed.

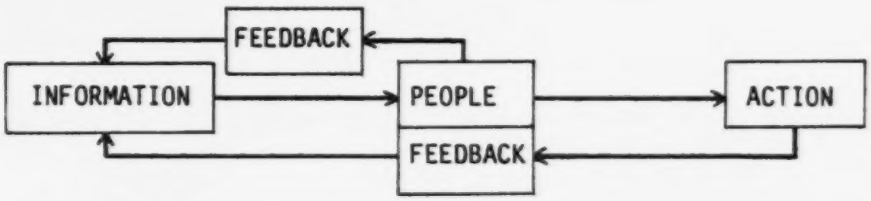
3 Work-based Project

Time guide

60 mins

Recall two communications involving yourself or a colleague. One of these should be an example of an effective communication and the other an example of a communication which went wrong.

Give a brief description of each communication and give an analysis of them both against our communication model:



Your analysis should clearly describe each stage and show how the one communication was effective and how the other failed.

Send to tutor

Now get your answers to your study tutor either by post or handing it over personally. You will receive your tutor's assessment and comment back through the post as soon as can be managed.

PART D UNIT REVIEW

1 Return to objectives

Having completed your work on this unit let's review how you feel about each of our four opening objectives. I will repeat them here and add comment.

You should be better able to:

* **UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATIONS TO A SUPERVISOR**

We stressed that we can only get work done by our workteams by using communications. The performance of our workteams therefore is a measure of our success as effective communicators. You already knew this - but if this unit helped to confirm your understanding and strengthened this view then this objective has been met.

Now to our second objective. You should be better able to:

* **DESCRIBE THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS IN TERMS OF A COMMUNICATION MODEL**

Although there are other communication models, we developed a particular one which was useful in that it dealt with the basic features of the participants, the information, the action and two kinds of feedback. If you are able to recall our model and describe it in a little detail then you have met this objective.

Now to our third objective. You should be better able to:

* **ADOPT A PLANNED APPROACH TO COMMUNICATION**

We stressed the importance of planning all communications however trivial some of them might seem. We also noted that the planning, helped by our 3-point planning model, is not necessarily time consuming. Chances are that a little time spent in planning will save a great deal of time later on if the communication goes wrong. If you are now clearer about this planning stage then you have achieved this objective.

Now to our fourth objective. You should be better able to:

* **APPLY THE SKILLS OF WRITTEN, SPOKEN AND BEHAVIOURAL COMMUNICATIONS MORE EFFECTIVELY AT YOUR WORKPLACE**

Only you can tell if you have met this objective - I can't possibly know whether your workplace communications has improved. My guess is that the time you have now spent on this unit has already begun to filter through into your workplace. I can only hope that this unit has helped you reach this objective.

I hope that this work you have done was enjoyable and useful enough to encourage you to continue in your studies.

2 Extensions

I recommend that you take up as many of these extensions as you can. They will further increase your understanding and interest. You will also be able to check out a number of the ideas that I mention in the Unit. The extra time and effort will prove very worthwhile.

EXTENSION 1 BBC TV series "SUPERVISORS"
No 5 - "The need to know"

This will help you to gain a broader view of communication because it emphasises different aspects of communications. However you will find confirmation of its vital role in managing.

EXTENSION 2 Book: Choice Unit 62: Writing Skills

Author: Diana Thomas

Publisher: Northern Regional Management Centre

You'll find that Diana deals with the kind of day-to-day writing that all supervisors do.

EXTENSION 3 Book: Choice Unit 61: Speaking Skills

Author: Diana Thomas

Publisher: Northern Regional Management Centre

Once again, you'll find that Diana deals with the kind of speaking skills useful to all supervisors.

EXTENSION 4 Book: Straight and Crooked Thinking

Author: Robert Thouless

Publisher: Pan Books Ltd

Chapter III "Some dishonest tricks in argument" contains many more examples of faulty thinking or faulty arguments - if you are sufficiently intrigued by such ideas you'll find this book interesting, and it's useful too.

EXTENSION 5 Film: A Question of May

Publisher: Guild, Sound and Vision

This short film demonstrates well the usefulness of our communication model. It covers other features of communicating that we have not raised so you will find the film of wider interest.

EXTENSION 6 Book: Effective Communication - made simple

Author: E C Eyre

Publisher: W H Allen

See chapter 20 for a short section on the impact of facial expressions and bodily gestures on communications. Ideas like this alert us to some of the more subtle forms of communications.

These extension opportunities can all be taken up via your Resource Centre.

They will either have the materials or will arrange that you have access to the materials. However it may be more convenient to check out the materials with your Personnel or Training people at work - they may well give you access. There are other good reasons for approaching your own people, for example they will become aware of your interest and you can involve them in your development.

3 References

REFERENCE 1 Book: Effective Communication - made simple

Author: E C Eyre

Publisher: W H Allen

See Chapter 1 "A Definition"

REFERENCE 2 Book: Supervisory Management

Author: David Evans

Publisher: Holt, Rinehart and Winston

See Sections 7.2.4 and 7.2.6

REFERENCE 3 Book: Effective Communication - made simple

Author: E C Eyre

Publisher: W H Allen

See Chapter 20 "Differences between spoken and written English"

REFERENCE 4 Book: Effective Communication - made simple

Author: E C Eyre

Publisher: W H Allen

See Chapter 27 for comments on LISTENING.

These references can all be taken up via your Support Centre. They will either have the materials or will arrange that you have access to the materials. However it may be more convenient to check out the materials with your Personnel or Training people at work - they may well give you access. There are other good reasons for approaching your own people, for example they will become aware of your interest and you can involve them in your development.

If you do wish to make use of these references then don't think that you must read them right through. Just dip into them for a slightly wider treatment of the topic raised by the unit.

I should warn that the language and style of the writing is often difficult to cope with. So don't struggle with it too much. Do what I do when in difficulty, put the book back on the shelf and find a better one!

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12 Enriching Work
13 Workteams
14 Team Leading
15 Leading Change
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